United Nations A/C.5/58/22

General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 December 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session
Fifth Committee
Agenda items 52 (a) and 121

Oceans and the law of the sea: oceans and the law of the sea

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Oceans and the law of the sea

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/58/L.19

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. At its 63rd plenary meeting, on 24 November 2003, the General Assembly considered draft resolution A/58/L.19.

I. Requests contained in the draft resolution

2. By operative paragraphs 64 (a), (d) and (e) and 65 of draft resolution A/58/L.19, the General Assembly would:

(a) Convene a group of experts of no more than 24 participants comprising representatives of States, including all regional groups, and representatives from intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, including both scientists and policy makers, to produce, including through the possibility of hiring a consultant, a draft document with details on the scope, general framework and outline of the regular process, peer review, secretariat, capacity-building and funding, and to consider, review and refine the draft document;

(b) Convene an international workshop with representatives from all interested parties, in conjunction with the fifth meeting of the Consultative Process, to further consider and review the draft document;

(c) Convene an intergovernmental meeting to finalize and adopt the document and to formally establish the regular process;

03-63558 (E) 021203

(d) Accept the offer of the Government of Iceland to host this intergovernmental meeting in Reykjavik in 2004, in accordance with paragraph 17 of General Assembly resolution 47/202 A of 22 December 1992.

II. Relationship of the request to the programme of work for the biennium 2004-2005

3. The requests contained in operative paragraphs 64 (a) and (d) of the draft resolution are related to subprogramme 4, Law of the sea and ocean affairs, of programme 5 of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005, as revised.[1] Provisions were included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 under subprogramme 4 of section 8, Legal affairs.[2]

4. Paragraph 64 (e) of draft resolution A/58/L.19 relates to section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services,[3] and section 8, Legal affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. No provision was included in the proposed programme budget under these sections for the servicing of the meeting. Thus, there is no current relationship between the request and the programme of work for the biennium 2004-2005.

5. The request set out in operative paragraph 65 also relates to section 8, Legal affairs. It is to be understood that, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1798 (XVII) of 11 December 1962, as reaffirmed by paragraph 17 of resolution 47/202 A, any additional costs arising from the holding of the meeting outside of New York would be borne by the host Government.

III. Activities by which the request would be implemented

6. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/58/L.19, the activities required for the implementation of the request in paragraph 64 (e) would be as follows: it is envisaged that the three-day intergovernmental meeting would hold two meetings per day (a total of six) with interpretation in all six languages. The Secretary-General would accordingly provide the necessary facilities and servicing for the performance of its work.

IV. Additional requirements

7. The provisions set out in operative paragraphs 64 (a) and (d) of draft resolution A/58/L.19 are already incorporated in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 under subprogramme 4, Law of the sea and ocean affairs, of section 8, Legal affairs; hence, no additional appropriation would be required.

8. The requirements in respect of operative paragraph 64 (e) of the draft resolution would entail an additional amount of $347,000 (at 2004-2005 rates) at full cost under section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

V. Potential for absorption during the biennium 2004-2005

9. No provision in connection with the intergovernmental meeting has been made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. The capacity for absorption of the additional costs, in whole or in part, will be considered by the Fifth Committee in the context of its review of the consolidated statements of potential charges against the contingency fund.

10. As concerns the additional requirements for holding the meeting in Iceland, the difference in costs between New York and Iceland would be borne by the host Government, in accordance with draft resolution A/58/L.19.

VI. Contingency fund

11. It will be recalled that, under the procedure established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the approved or proposed programme budget. Under that procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned can be implemented only through the redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or the modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities must be deferred to a later biennium.

VII. Summary

12. **In summary, the implications of the proposal contained in draft resolution A/58/L.19 for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 would be as follows:**

(a) **Additional requirements of $347,000 (at 2004-2005 rates), as a charge against the contingency fund, would be required in respect of the intergovernmental meeting;**

(b) **No additional provision would be required for holding the intergovernmental meeting in Reykjavik, as the additional requirements would be borne by the host Government.**

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 6* and corrigendum (A/57/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1).

[2] A/58/6 (Sect. 8).

[3] Ibid., (Sect. 2).